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SUBJECT: FEBRUARY 19, 2009 SECURITY COUNCIL CONSULTATIONS
ON UNMIT

(U) USUN may draw from the following building blocks during UN Security Council consultations on the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) scheduled for February 19, 2009. Department requests that post reclear the final statement if it is significantly and substantively different than the building blocks below.

Begin building blocks.

We warmly welcome President Jose Ramos-Horta, and congratulate him, Prime Minister Gusmao, and the political leadership, state institutions, and the Timorese people, for their courage in restoring peace and stability to the country. We congratulate all of them for the significant progress they have made since the crisis in 2006 and the events of February 11, 2008, in which there were attempts to take the lives of both Prime Minister Gusmao and President Ramos-Horta.

The United States also commends the advances that President Ramos-Horta and the Timorese government have made in creating opportunities for all political parties to make significant contributions to areas of national interest. We are confident that such positive involvement will continue.

I must echo the sentiments the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Atul Khare, made to my colleagues in Washington when he emphasized that it is time for the Timorese to take control of and address the underlying causes of the issues that bring instability to Timor-Leste. This must be done through promotion of a culture of democratic values, including the development of compromise solutions, accountability, and transparency.

Security sector reform (SSR) is a primary issue that must be addressed. Timor-Leste has taken positive steps forward, and must continue with the momentum of reform. The National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL) and UNMIT police must strengthen cooperation and constructive engagement, particularly as the PNTL gradually resumes policing responsibilities. The United States also encourages stakeholders to carry on efforts to increase the effectiveness of the PNTL.

Likewise, Timorese leadership must clarify roles and responsibilities between the Timor-Leste Defense Force (F-FDTL) and the PNTL, including defining a meaningful role for military forces in a peacetime setting, and determining what types of police units would be most effective in the country. Augmented civilian oversight and accountability mechanisms are vital to both security institutions.

The responsibility and independence of the judiciary is critical to sustained progress in Timor-Leste. The Timorese must persist in their fight for justice, and establish a system of accountability for criminal offenses.

Equally important, Timorese must take strong action against the culture of impunity in order to achieve true and

meaningful reconciliation. We consequently believe that the leadership in Timor-Leste should continue to pursue accountability for criminal offenses committed during the 2006 crisis.

We maintain our support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in their promotion of a coordinated approach to justice sector reform, based on an independent needs assessment.

The United States expresses concern over the increase in poverty in Timor-Leste, as noted in the report of the Secretary-General, and agrees with stakeholders that implementation by Timorese leadership of rural development policies and targeted programs aimed at reducing poverty levels and lowering the unemployment rate are critical.

The United States encourages the international community to assist the Government of Timor-Leste with local elections, currently planned for this year. The United States also encourages UNMIT to support this effort, acting within its mandate.

We welcome the return of a substantial number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to their homes. We are optimistic that the Timorese will continue the process of

STATE 00014578 002 OF 002

reintegration into their communities. However, we remain concerned about those IDPs who are unwelcome or otherwise unable to return to their communities of origin, as well as those who claim they have no communities to return to. We urge the Timorese to find sustainable solutions for these vulnerable citizens. Furthermore, we encourage the Timorese to closely monitor the status of returned IDPs in the coming months as their resettlement funds are depleted.

The United States stresses its support for the efforts of the Government of Timor-Leste in developing a national gender equality policy and strategy, which we believe is a key to success in Timorese society.

We encourage the Government of Timor-Leste to consider peacebuilding capacities in areas such as IDP integration, employment and empowerment, and socio-economic development.

The United States welcomes the February 4 report of the Secretary-General, and acknowledges the work done by the Secretary-General, the Government of Timor-Leste, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and UNMIT, as well as the international community in developing a medium-term strategy and establishing benchmarks for measuring and tracking progress in Timor-Leste.

Finally, the United States would like to commend Timor-Leste for its advancements and its achievements, and would like to recognize the hard work of Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Atul Khare, the dedicated UNMIT staff who serve alongside him, and the UN Country Team for their efforts. We also would like to pay tribute to the bilateral and multilateral partners for the positive impacts they have made in Timor-Leste, and the international security forces who work diligently to maintain law and stability.

End building blocks.
CLINTON